

Suggestions for Preparing a Proposal for the IQC

The following are suggestions based on the evaluation criteria in Attachment J.7. of the IQC master contract on how to prepare a proposal for an IQC Task Order. It should be noted that the following are recommendations and will not guarantee a Task Order contract award, but will give an idea of what USTDA is looking for in a IQC Task Order proposal submission.

General Proposal Instructions

- Proposals on average should be no more than 30 pages excluding CVs and appendixes.
- Be sure your proposals are succinct. For example, there is no need to take five pages to address the Contractor's experience.
- Clearly address all evaluation criteria and how you will complete the work in your proposal.
- Carefully review the evaluation criteria for each task order as it may change.
- Demonstrate whether you are flexible in delivering the activity, in case there is a change in timeline.
- List any timing constraints that you may have within a six month time frame before and after a proposed event.
- If you are using a proposal previously submitted, be sure to search and replace key words (i.e. don't mention Kenya if the proposal is for an activity in Colombia).
- There is no need to cut and paste background information from the RFP into the proposal. If you choose to include background information, build upon what has been provided by USTDA. Perhaps there is other sector information that we don't have that would demonstrate your knowledge of the country/sector/industry/activity goals. If you don't have specific background information to demonstrate knowledge of the country/sector/etc, perhaps you can highlight your past experience working on similar activities/work.

Proposed Budget and Allocation of Resources/Staff Time

- When preparing the budget it should be 100% accurate.
- Remember to provide a budget narrative that provides details not evident in the task order rate chart.
- Reimbursable expenses should be based on fair market prices at the time of proposal submission – undervaluing reimbursable expenses may be to your detriment during proposal evaluation.
- Ensure that your budget accounts for all of the requirements set forth in the SOW. (For example, four people are listed as personnel but the budget only accounts for three people to travel). If the budget deviates from the SOW, explain why.

Quality of Proposed Itinerary and/or Event Agenda

- The Proposed itinerary should clearly demonstrate how it meets the objective of the activity. (For example, why meeting with certain companies or sector experts is needed).
- It is realized that changes happen but the proposed itinerary should be as detailed as possible.
- The offeror should demonstrate expertise if the RFP encourages it. There may be ideas, meetings, locations that USTDA has not thought of.
- If the offeror deviates from the proposed cities/meetings/etc., explain/describe why the suggested deviation better meets the objectives of the activity.

Proposed Lodging, Conference Facilities, and other Logistical Arrangements

- Meals, airlines and air travel and the costs should be clearly stated in the proposal and estimated in the budget.
- Consult the GSA and State Department per diem schedules for guidance on estimating lodging and meal expenses. Contractors may quote different rates for lodging and meals, as the US Government rates may not always be sufficient. In these cases, don't forget to provide a justification in your budget narrative
- Be sure to include the resumes and qualifications of suggested translators/interpreters.
- When developing the budget, keep in mind that restaurant selection should be appropriate. Fast food restaurants are generally not appropriate.
- You should check with the USTDA IRC's business center manager for business center availability if you plan on using the USTDA business center in your proposal or budget estimates

Proposed Marketing Plan

- The marketing plan should be as detailed as possible. (For example provide previous advertising campaigns, direct phone campaigns, online campaigns and any other relevant materials in an appendix).
- Provide dollar figure examples of past sponsorship levels secured for events to build the case for why your marketing plan works.
- Provide a list of multiplier organizations that you may leverage to support the activity.
- Offerors may propose different gate fees and sponsorship levels than provided in the Task Order Statement of Work. The budget narrative should justify and cite any significant factors that form the Offeror's recommendation for different gate fees and/or sponsorship levels.

Quality and Appropriateness of Contractor and Subcontractor Staff

- Clearly describe the role of each contractor and subcontractor staff member and explain their qualifications to fulfill the role.
- The demonstration of staff qualifications should include the following: sector expertise, region expertise, US expertise, logistical expertise, similar work, relevant language experience, marketing experience and expertise, delegate experience and in general how and why they are qualified.

Past Performance/Previous Experience

- You should always be aware of your past performance evaluations. Feel free to ask the Contracts Office to send you your past performance evaluations.
- If there are negatives on a past performance evaluation, this should be addressed in your proposal and how they will be addressed in the future.
- Explain experience or similar experience in detail.
- Explain experience in sector and region.
- Clearly demonstrate why your experience is relevant to a particular activity